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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/991,620	11/05/2001	Hideki Tanaka	B588-025	4702

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EXAMINER

JAKETIC, BRYAN J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3627

DATE MAILED: 04/16/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/991,620

Applicant(s)

TANAKA, HIDEKI

Examiner

Bryan Jaketic

Art Unit

3627

ML

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 February 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

2. Claims 1-3, 5-12, 14-17, 19, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Peachey-Kountz et al. Peachey-Kountz et al teach an order-acceptance management system and method for assigning a rank to an orderer comprising: inventory acquisition means for acquiring information concerning a number of units of a commodity in stock and allocated to a group corresponding to the rank (see col. 4, lines 45-55); determination means for determining whether an order can be accepted, wherein the determination is based on the number of units in stock and whether the commodity that belongs to the group corresponding to the rank assigned to the orderer and that is capable of satisfying the order issued is in stock (see col. 6, lines 7-40). Peachey-Kountz et al also teach that the determination means determines whether the commodity belongs to a group corresponding to a lower ranked group, if the commodity is not in stock for the orderer's rank (see col. 10, lines 40-52). Peachey-Kountz et al also teach allocation decision means for deciding allocation of a number of units of the

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commodity in stock on a per group basis (see, for example, col. 4, lines 56-67).

Peachey-Kountz et al further teach delivery-schedule acquisition means for acquiring information concerning a delivery schedule of a commodity and means for deciding a delivery date (see col. 9, lines 52-62). Peachey-Kountz et al also teach the step of notifying the computer of whether the order will be accepted (see, for example, col. 10, lines 53-61).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 4, 13, and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Peachey-Kountz et al. Peachey-Kountz et al teach all of the limitations described in paragraph 2 of this Office Action. Peachey-Kountz et al do not teach dealings-performance acquisition means. However, it is common in the art to rank buyers based on their performance. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to employ dealings-performance acquisition means to ensure that the best re-sellers receive priority.

Conclusion


5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Hegde et al and Ausubel teach order-acceptance management systems that prioritize orderers.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Bryan Jaketic whose telephone number is (703) 308-0134. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday (9:00-5:30).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robert Olszewski can be reached on (703)308-5183. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

bj


4/12/04